A LETTER

TO THE

EARL OF SHELBURNE,

NOW

MARQUIS OF LANSDOWNE,

ON HIS

SPEECH,

JULY 10, 1782,

RESPECTING THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF

AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

By THOMAS PAINE,

Secretary for Foreign Affairs to Congress in the American War, and Author of COMMON SENSE, a LETTER to the ABBE RAYNAL, RIGHTS of MAN, &c.

DUBLIN:

PRINTED FOR G. BURNET, P. BYRNE, P. WOGAN, W. SLEATER, A. GRUEBER, J. MOORE, J. JONES, G. DRAPER, W. JONES, R. WHITE, R. M'ALLISTER, J. RICE AND M. O'LEARY.

M.DCC.XCI.

A

LETTER, &c.

My Lord,

A SPEECH which has been printed in ſeveral of the Britiſh and New-York Newſpapers, as coming from your Lordſhip, in anſwer to one from the Duke of Richmond of the 10th of July laſt, contains expreſſions and opinions ſo new and ſingular, and ſo enveloped in myſterious reaſoning, that I addreſs this publication to you, for the purpoſe of giving them a free and candid examination. The ſpeech I allude to is in theſe words:

" His Lordſhip ſaid, it had been men-
" tioned in another place, that he had been
" guilty of inconſiſtence. To clear himſelf
" of this, he aſſerted that he ſtill held the
" ſame principles in reſpect to American
" Independence which he at firſt imbibed.
" He had been, and yet was of opinion,
" whenever the Parliament of Great Britain
" acknowledges that point, the ſun of Eng-
" land's glory is ſet for ever. Such were
" the ſentiments he poſſeſſed on a former
" day, and ſuch the ſentiments he conti-
" nued to hold at this hour. It was the
" opinion of Lord Chatham, as well as many
" able ſtateſmen. Other noble Lords, how-
" ever, think differently; and as the majority
" of the Cabinet ſupport them, he acquieſced
" in the meaſure, diſſenting from the idea;
" and the point is ſettled for bringing the mat-
" ter into the full diſcuſſion of Parliament,
" where it will be candidly, fairly, and im-

partially

"partially debated. The Independence of "America would end in the ruin of Eng- "land; and that a peace patched up with "France would give that proud enemy the "means of yet trampling on this country. "The ſun of England's glory he wiſhed not "to ſee ſet for ever; he looked for a ſpark "at leaſt to be left, which might in time light "us up to a new day. But if Independence "was to be granted, if Parliament deemed "that meaſure prudent, he foreſaw in his "own mind that England was undone. He "wiſhed to God that he had been deputed "to Congreſs, that he might plead the cauſe "of that country as well as of this, and that "he might exerciſe whatever powers he "poſſeſſed as an orator, to ſave both from "ruin, in a conviction to Congreſs, that, if "their Independence was ſigned, their liber- "ties were gone for ever.

"PEACE,

"PEACE, his Lordſhip added, was a de-
"ſirable object, but it muſt be an honour-
"able peace, and not an humiliating one,
"dictated by France, or inſiſted on by Ame-
"rica It was very true, this kingdom was
"not in a flouriſhing ſtate, it was impo-
"veriſhed by war. But if we were not
"rich, it was evident that France was poor.
"If we were ſtraitened in our finances,
"the enemy were exhauſted in their re-
"ſources. This was a great empire; it
"abounded with brave men, who were able
"and willing to fight in a common cauſe;
"the language of humiliation ſhould not,
"therefore, be the language of Great Britain.
"His Lordſhip ſaid, that he was not aſha-
"med nor afraid of thoſe expreſſions going
"to America. There were numbers, great
"numbers there, who were of the ſame way
"of thinking, in reſpect to that country

"being

"being dependent on this, and who, with "his Lordſhip, perceived ruin and inde- "pendence linked together."

THUS far the ſpeech; on which I remark, —That his Lordſhip is a total ſtranger to the mind and ſentiments of America; that he has wrapped himſelf up in fond deluſion, that ſomething leſs than Independence may, under his Adminiſtration, be accepted; and he wiſhes himſelf ſent to Congreſs, to prove the moſt extraordinary of all doctrines, which is, that INDEPENDENCE, the ſublimeſt of all human conditions, is loſs of liberty.

IN anſwer to which we may ſay, that in order to know what the contrary word DEPENDENCE means, we have only to look back to thoſe years of ſevere humiliation, when the mildeſt of all petitions could obtain no

other notice than the haughtieſt of all inſults; and when the baſe terms of unconditional ſubmiſſion were demanded, or undiſtinguiſhable deſtruction threatened. It is nothing to us that the Miniſtry have been changed, for they may be changed again. The guilt of Government is the crime of a whole country; and the nation that can, though but for a moment, think and act as England has done, can never afterwards be believed or truſted. There are caſes in which it is as impoſſible to reſtore character to life, as it is to recover the dead. It is a phœnix that can expire but once, and from whoſe aſhes there is no reſurrection. Some offences are of ſuch a ſlight compoſition, that they reach no farther than the temper, and are created or cured by a thought. But the ſin of England has ſtruck the heart of America,

America, and nature has not left it in our power to ſay we can forgive.

YOUR Lordſhip wiſhes for an opportunity to plead before Congreſs *the cauſe of England and America, and to ſave, as you ſay, both from ruin.*

THAT the country, which, for more than ſeven years, has ſought our deſtruction, ſhould now cringe to ſolicit our protection, is adding the wretchedneſs of diſgrace to the miſery of diſappointment; and if England has the leaſt ſpark of ſuppoſed honour left, that ſpark muſt be darkened by aſking, and extinguiſhed by receiving, the ſmalleſt favour from America: for the criminal who owes his life to the grace and mercy of the injured, is more executed by living than he who dies.

But a thouſand pleadings, even from your Lordſhip, can have no effect. Honour, intereſt, and every ſenſation of the heart, would plead againſt you. We are a people who think not as you think; and what is equally true, you cannot feel as we feel. The ſituations of the two countries are exceedingly different. We have been the ſeat of war: you have ſeen nothing of it. The moſt wanton deſtruction has been committed in our ſight; the moſt inſolent barbarity has been acted on our feelings. We can look round and ſee the remains of burnt and deſtroyed houſes, once the fair fruit of hard induſtry, and now the ſtriking monuments of Britiſh brutality. We walk over the dead whom we loved, in every part of America, and remember by whom they fell. There is ſcarcely a village but brings to life ſome melancholy thought, and reminds us of what

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we have ſuffered, and of thoſe we have loſt by the inhumanity of Britain. A thouſand images ariſe to us, which, from ſituation, you cannot ſee, and are accompanied by as many ideas which you cannot know; and therefore your ſuppoſed ſyſtem of reaſoning would apply to nothing, and all your expectations die of themſelves.

THE queſtion, whether England ſhall accede to the Independence of America, and which your Lordſhip ſays is to undergo a parliamentary diſcuſſion, is ſo very ſimple, and compoſed of ſo few caſes, that it ſcarcely needs a debate.

IT is the only way out of an expenſive and ruinous war, which has now no object, and without which acknowledgement there can be no peace.

BUT

BUT your Lordſhip ſays, "*The ſun of Great Britain will ſet whenever ſhe acknowledges the Independence of America.*" Whereas the metaphor would have been ſtrictly juſt, to have left the ſun wholly out of the figure, and have aſcribed her not acknowledging it to the influence of the moon.

BUT the expreſſion, if true, is the greateſt confeſſion of diſgrace that could be made, and furniſhes America with the higheſt notions of ſovereign independent importance. Mr. Wedderburne, about the year 1776, made uſe of an idea of much the ſame kind, —"*Relinquiſh America!*" ſays he—*What is* "*it but to deſire a giant to ſhrink ſpontaneouſly* "*into a dwarf.*"

ALAS! are thoſe people who call themſelves Engliſhmen, of ſo little internal conſequence,

quence, that when America is gone, or ſhuts her eyes upon them, their ſun is ſet, they can ſhine no more, but grope about in obſcurity, and contract into inſignificant animals? Was America, then, the giant of the empire, and England only her dwarf in waiting? Is the caſe ſo ſtrangely altered, that thoſe who once thought we could not live without them, now declare they cannot exiſt without us? Will they tell to the world, and that from their firſt Miniſter of State, that America is their all in all; that it is by her importance only they can live, and breathe. and have a being? Will they, who threatened to bring us to their feet, now caſt themſelves at ours, and own that without us they are not a nation? Are they become ſo unqualified to debate on Independence, that they have loſt all idea of it in themſelves, and are calling to the rocks and mountains of America

to cover their inſignificance? Or, if America is loſt, is it manly to ſob over it like a child for its rattle, and invite the laughter of the world by declarations of diſgrace? Surely, the more conſiſtent conduct would be, to bear it without complaint; and to ſhew that England, without America, can preſerve her independence, and a ſuitable rank with other European Powers. You were not contented while you had her, and to weep for her now is childiſh.

But Lord Shelburne thinks that ſomething may yet be done. What that ſomething is, or how it is to be accompliſhed, is a matter in obſcurity. By arms there is no hope. The experience of nearly eight years, with the expence of an hundred million pounds ſterling, and the loſs of two armies, muſt poſitively decide that point. Beſides,

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the Britiſh have loſt their intereſt in America with the diſaffected. Every part of it has been tried. There is no new ſcene left for deluſion: and the thouſands who have been ruined by adhering to them, and have now to quit the ſettlements they had acquired, and be conveyed like tranſports to cultivate the deſerts of Auguſtine and Nova Scotia, has put an end to all farther expectations of aid.

If you caſt your eyes on the people of England, what have they to conſole themſelves with for the millions expended? or, what encouragement is there left to continue throwing good money after bad? America can carry on the war for ten years longer, and all the charges of government included, for leſs than you can defray the charges of war and government for one year. And I,

who know both countries, know well, that the people of America can afford to pay their ſhare of the expence much better than the people of England can. Beſides, it is their own eſtates and property, their own rights, liberties and government, they are defending, and were they not to do it, they would deſerve to loſe all, and none would pity them. The fault would be their own, and their puniſhment juſt.

The Britiſh army in America care not how long the war laſts. They enjoy an eaſy and indolent life. They fatten on the folly of one country and the ſpoils of another, and, between their plunder and their pay, may go home rich. But the caſe is very different with the labouring farmer, the working tradeſman, and the neceſſitous poor in England, the ſweat of whoſe brow goes

day

day after day to feed, in prodigality and sloth, the army that is robbing both them and us. Removed from the eye of the country that supports them, and distant from the government that employs them, they cut and carve for themselves, and there is none to call them to account.

But England will be ruined, says Lord Shelburne, if America is independent.

Then, I say, is England already ruined, for America is already independent: and if Lord Shelburne will not allow this, he immediately denies the fact which he infers. Besides, to make England the mere creature of America, is paying too great a compliment to us, and too little to himself.

But the declaration is a rhapſody of inconſiſtence. For to ſay, as Lord Shelburne has numberleſs times ſaid, that the war againſt America is ruinous, and yet to continue the proſecution of that ruinous war for the purpoſe of avoiding ruin, is a language which cannot be underſtood. * Neither is it poſſible to ſee how the Independence of America is to accompliſh the ruin of England after the war is over, and yet not effect it before. America cannot be more independent of her, nor a greater enemy to her, hereafter than ſhe is now; nor England derive leſs advantages from her than at preſent; why then is ruin to follow in the beſt ſtate of the caſe, and not in the worſt! And if not in the worſt, why is it to follow at all?

That a nation is to be ruined by peace and commerce, and fourteen or fifteen millions

lions a-year leſs expences than before, is a new doctrine in politics. We have heard much clamour of national ſavings and œconomy; but ſurely the true œconomy would be, to ſave the whole charge of a ſilly, foolish, and headſtrong war; becauſe, compared with this, all other retrenchments are bawbles and trifles.

But is it poſſible that Lord Shelburne can be ſerious in ſuppoſing the leaſt advantage can be obtained by arms, or that any advantage can be equal to the expence, or the danger of attempting it? Will not the capture of one army after another ſatisfy him, but all muſt become priſoners? Muſt England ever be the ſport of hope and the dupe of deluſion? Sometimes our currency was to fail; another time our army was to diſband: then whole provinces were to revolt. Such a General

ſaid

ſaid this and that; another wrote ſo and ſo. Lord Chatham was of this opinion; and Lord Somebody elſe of another. To-day 20,000 Ruſſians and 20 Ruſſian ſhips of the line were to come; to-morrow the Empreſs was abuſed without mercy or decency.—Then the Emperor of Germany was to be bribed with a million of money, and the King of Pruſſia was to do wonderful things. At one time it was, Lo here! and then it was, Lo there! Sometimes this Power, and ſometimes that Power, was to engage in the war, juſt as if the whole world was as mad and fooliſh as Britain. And thus, from year to year, has every ſtraw been catched at, and every Will-with-a-Wiſp led them a new dance.

THIS year a ſtill newer folly is to take place. Lord Shelburne wiſhes to be ſent

to

to Congreſs, and he thinks that ſomething may be done.

ARE not the repeated declarations of Congreſs, and which all America ſupports, that they will not even hear any propoſals whatever, until the unconditional and unequivocal Independence of America is recogniſed; are not, I ſay, theſe declarations anſwer enough?

BUT for England to receive any thing from America now, after ſo many inſults, injuries, and outrages, acted towards us, would ſhew ſuch a ſpirit of meanneſs in her, that we could not but deſpiſe her for accepting it. And ſo far from Lord Shelburne coming here to ſolicit it, it would be the greateſt diſgrace we could do them to offer it. England would appear a wretch indeed,

at

at this time of day, to aſk or owe any thing to the bounty of America. Has not the name of Engliſhman blots enough upon it, without inventing more? Even Lucifer would ſcorn to reign in Heaven by permiſſion, and yet an Engliſhman can creep for only an entrance into America. Or has a land of Liberty ſo many charms, that to be a door-keeper in it is better than to be an Engliſh Miniſter of State?

But what can this expected ſomething be? or, if obtained, what can it amount to, but new diſgraces, contentions, and quarrels? The people of America have for years accuſtomed themſelves to think and ſpeak ſo freely and contemptuouſly of Engliſh authority, and the inveteracy is ſo deeply rooted, that a perſon inveſted with any authority from that country, and attempting

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to exerciſe it here, would have the life of a toad under a harrow. They would look on him as an interloper, to whom their compaſſion permitted a reſidence. He would be no more than the Mungo of the farce, and if he diſliked that, he muſt ſet off. It would be a ſtation of degradation, debaſed by our pity, and deſpiſed by our pride, and would place England in a more contemptible ſituation than any ſhe has yet ſuffered by the war. We have too high an opinion of ourſelves, ever to think of yielding again the leaſt obedience to outlandiſh authority; and for a thouſand reaſons, England would be the laſt country in the world to yield it to. She has been treacherous, and we know it. Her character is gone, and we have ſeen the funeral.

SURELY ſhe loves to fiſh in troubled waters, and drink the cup of contention, or ſhe would not now think of mingling her affairs with thoſe of America. It would be like a fooliſh dotard taking to his arms the bride that deſpiſes him, or who has placed on his head the enſigns of her diſguſt. It is kiſſing the hand that boxes his ears, and propoſing to renew the exchange. The thought is as ſervile as the war was wicked, and ſhews the laſt ſcene of the drama as inconſiſtent as the firſt.

As America is gone, the only act of manhood is to *let her go.* Your Lordſhip had no hand in the ſeparation, and you will gain no honour by temporiſing politics. Beſides, there is ſomething ſo exceedingly whimſical, unſteady, and even inſincere in

the preſent conduct of England, that ſhe exhibits herſelf in the moſt diſhonourable colours.

On the ſecond of Auguſt laſt General Carleton and Admiral Digby wrote to General Waſhington in theſe words:

"The reſolution of the Houſe of Com-
"mons of the 27th of February laſt have
"been placed in your Excellency's hands,
"and intimations given at the ſame time,
"that farther pacific meaſures were likely
"to follow. Since which, until the preſent
"time, we have had no direct communica-
"tions from England; but a mail is now
"arrived, which brings us very important
"information. We are acquainted, Sir,
"*by authority*, that negotiations for a gene-
"ral peace have already commenced at

" Paris, and that Mr. Grenville is inveſted
" with full powers to treat with all the
" parties at war, and is now at Paris in the
" execution of his commiſſion. And we are
" farther, Sir, made acquainted, " *that his*
" *Majeſty, in order to remove any obſtacles to*
" *that peace which he ſo ardently wiſhes to*
" *reſtore, has commanded his Miniſters to direct*
" *Mr. Grenville, that the Independence of the*
" *Thirteen United provinces, ſhould be propoſed*
" *by him in the firſt inſtance, inſtead of making*
" *it a condition of a general treaty.*"

Now, taking your preſent meaſures into view, and comparing them with the declaration in this Letter, pray, what is the word of your King, or his Miniſters, or the Parliament, good for? Muſt we not look upon you as a confederated body of faithleſs, treacherous men, whoſe aſſurances are fraud,

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and their language deceit? What opinion can we poſſibly form of you, but that you are a loſt, abandoned, profligate nation, who ſport even with your own character, and are to be held by nothing but the bayonet or the halter?

To ſay, after this, *that the ſun of Great Britain will be ſet whenever ſhe acknowledges the Independence of America*, when the not doing it is the unqualified lie of Government, can be no other than the language of ridicule, the jargon of inconſiſtency. There were thouſands in America who predicted the deluſion, and looked upon it as a trick of treachery, to take us from our guard, and draw off our attention from the only ſyſtem of finance, by which we can be called, or deſerve to be called, a ſovereign, independent people. The fraud, on your part, might

might be worth attempting, but the ſacrifice to obtain it is too high.

THERE were others who credited the aſſurance, becauſe they thought it impoſſible that men who had their characters to eſtabliſh, would begin it with a lie. The proſecution of the war by the former Miniſtry was ſavage and horrid; ſince which it has been mean, trickiſh, and deluſive. The one went greedily into the paſſion of revenge, the other into the ſubtleties of low contrivance; till, between the crimes of both, there is ſcarcely left a man in America, be he Whig or Tory, who does not deſpiſe or deteſt the conduct of Britain.

THE management of Lord Shelburne, whatever may be his views, is a caution to us, and muſt be to the world, never to regard

Britiſh

Britiſh aſſurances. A perfidy ſo notorious cannot be hid. It ſtands even in the public papers of New York, with the names of Carleton and Digby affixed to it. It is a proclamation that the King of England is not to be believed: that the ſpirit of lying is the governing principle of the Miniſtry. It is holding up the character of the Houſe of Commons to public infamy, and warning all men not to credit them. Such is the conſequence which Lord Shelburne's management has brought upon his country.

After the authoriſed declarations contained in Carleton and Digby's letter, you ought, from every motive of honour, policy, and prudence, to have ſulfillled them, whatever might have been the event. It was the leaſt atonement you could poſſibly make to America, and the greateſt kindneſs you could do

do to yourſelves; for you will ſave millions by a general peace, and you will loſe as many by continuing the war.

COMMON SENSE.

Philadelphia,
October 29, 1782.

P. S. The manuſcript copy of this letter is ſent your Lordſhip, by the way of our Head Quarters, to New York, incloſing a late pamphlet of mine, addreſſed to the Abbe Reynal, which will ſerve to give your Lordſhip ſome idea of the principles and ſentiments of America.

C. S.

APPEN-

APPENDIX.

THE two following Letters were first publiſhed in England in the Morning Poſt.

TO THE AUTHORS OF THE REPUBLICAN.

GENTLEMEN,

M. DUCHASTELET has mentioned to me the intention of ſome perſons to commence a Work under the title of *The Republican.*

As I am a Citizen of a country which knows no other Majeſty than that of the People—no other Government than that of the Repreſentative body—no other Sovereignty than that of the Laws, and which is attached to *France* both by Alliance and by Gratitude, I voluntarily offer you my ſervices in ſupport of principles as honourable to a nation as they are adapted to promote the happineſs of mankind. I offer them to you with the more zeal, as I know the moral, literary, and political character of thoſe who are engaged in the undertaking, and find myſelf honoured in their good opinion.

But I muſt at the ſame time obſerve, that from my ignorance of the French language, my works muſt neceſſarily undergo a tranſlation; they can of courſe be but of little utility,

utility, and my offering muſt conſiſt more of wiſhes than ſervices—I muſt add, that I am obliged to paſs a part of this ſummer in England and Ireland.

As the Public has done me the unmerited favour of recognizing me under the appellation of "Common Senſe," which is my uſual ſignature, I ſhall continue it in this publication to avoid miſtakes, and to prevent my being ſuppoſed the author of works not my own. As to my Political Principles, I ſhall endeavour, in this letter, to trace their general features in ſuch a manner, as that they cannot be miſunderſtood.

It is deſireable in moſt inſtances to avoid that, which may give even the leaſt ſuſpicion with reſpect to the part meant to be adopted, and particularly on the preſent occaſion, where a perfect

a perfect clearneſs of expreſſion is neceſſary to the avoidance of any poſſible miſinterpretation. I am happy, therefore, to find, that the work in queſtion is entitled "*The Republican.*" This word expreſſes perfectly the idea which we ought to have of Government in general—*Res Publica*—the public affairs of a Nation.

As to the word *Monarchy*, though the addreſs and intrigue of Courts have rendered it familiar, it does not contain the leſs of reproach or of inſult to a nation. The word, in its immediate and original ſenſe, ſignifies *the abſolute Power of a ſingle Individual*, who may prove a fool, an hypocrite, or a tyrant. The appellation admits of no other interpretation than that which is here given. *France* is therefore not a *Monarchy*; it is inſulted when called by that name. The ſervile ſpirit which characteriſes this ſpecies of Government

vernment is baniſhed from FRANCE, and this country, like AMERICA, can now afford to Monarchy no more than a glance of diſdain.

OF the errors which monarchic ignorance or knavery has ſpread through the world; the one, which bears the marks of the moſt dexterous invention, is the opinion that the ſyſtem of *Republicaniſm* is only adapted to a ſmall country, and that a *Monarchy* is ſuited, on the contrary, to thoſe of greater extent. Such is the language of Courts, and ſuch the ſentiments which they have cauſed to be adopted in monarchic countries; but the opinion is contrary at the ſame time to principle and to experience.

THE GOVERNMENT, to be of real uſe, ſhould poſſeſs a complete knowledge of all the

the parties—all the circumſtances, and all the intereſts of a nation. The monarchic ſyſtem, in conſequence, inſtead of being ſuited to a country of great extent, would be more admiſſible in a ſmall territory, where an individual may be ſuppoſed to know the affairs and the intereſts of the whole. But when it is attempted to extend this individual knowledge to the affairs of a great country, the capacity of knowing bears no longer any proportion to the extent or multiplicity of the objects which ought to be known, and the Government inevitably falls from ignorance into tyranny. For the proof of this poſition we need only look to SPAIN, RUSSIA, GERMANY, TURKEY, and the whole of the Eaſtern Continent—Countries for the deliverance of which I offer my moſt ſincere wiſhes.

ON

ON the contrary, the true *Republican* ſyſtem, by Election and Repreſentation, offers the only means which are known, and in my opinion the only means which are poſſible of proportioning the wiſdom and the information of a Government to the extent of a country.

THE ſyſtem of *Repreſentation* is the ſtrongeſt and moſt powerful center that can be deviſed for a nation. Its attraction acts ſo powerfully, that men give it their approbation even without reaſoning on the cauſe; and FRANCE, however diſtant its ſeveral parts, finds itſelf at this moment *an Whole* in its *central* Repreſentation. The citizen is aſſured that his rights are protected, and the ſoldier feels that he is no longer the Slave of a Deſpot, but that he is become one of the Nation, and intereſted of courſe in its defence.

THE

THE States at preſent ſtyled *Republican*, as HOLLAND, GENOA, VENICE, BERNE, &c. are not only unworthy of the name, but are actually in oppoſition to every Principle of a *Republican* Government, and the countries ſubmitted to their power are, truly ſpeaking, ſubjected to an *Ariſtocratic* Slavery!

IT is, perhaps, impoſſible in the firſt ſteps which are made in a Revolution, to avoid all kind of error, in principle or in practice, or in ſome inſtances to prevent the combination of both. Before the ſenſe of a nation is ſufficiently enlightened, and before men have entered into the habits of a free communication with each other of their natural thoughts, a certain reſerve—a timid prudence ſeizes on the human mind, and prevents it from attaining its level, with that vigour and promptitude which belongs

to

to *Right*.—An example of this influence diſcovers itſelf in the commencement of the preſent Revolution: but happily this diſcovery has been made before the Conſtitution was completed, and in time to provide a remedy.

THE *Hereditary Succeſſion* can never exiſt as a matter of *right*; it is a *nullity*—a *nothing*. To admit the idea is to regard men as a ſpecies of property belonging to ſome individuals, either born or to be born! It is to conſider our deſcendents, and all poſterity as mere animals without a Right or a Will! It is, in fine, the moſt baſe and humiliating idea that ever degraded the human ſpecies, and which, for the honour of Humanity, ſhould be deſtroyed for ever.

THE idea of hereditary ſucceſſion is ſo contrary to the Rights of Man, that if we

were ourſelves to be recalled to exiſtence, inſtead of being replaced by our poſterity, we ſhould not have the right of depriving ourſelves beforehand of thoſe *Rights* which would then properly belong to us. On what ground, then, or by what authority, do we dare to deprive of their rights thoſe children who will ſoon be men? Why are we not ſtruck with the injuſtice which we perpetrate on our deſcendents, by endeavouring to tranſmit them as a vile herd, to maſters whoſe vices are all that can be foreſeen.

WHENEVER the *French* Conſtitution ſhall be rendered conformable to its *Declaration* of *Rights*, we ſhall then be enabled to give to FRANCE, and with juſtice, the appellation of a *civic Empire*; for its government will be the empire of Laws founded on the great republican principles of *Elective Repreſentation*,

tion, and the *Rights of Man*.—But Monarchy and Hereditary Succeſſion are incompatible with the *baſis* of its conſtitution.

I hope that I have at preſent ſufficiently proved to you that I am a good Republican; and I have ſuch a confidence in the truth of theſe principles, that I doubt not they will ſoon be as univerſal in *France* as in *America*. The pride of human nature will aſſiſt their evidence, will contribute to their eſtabliſhment, and Men will be aſhamed of Monarchy.

I am, with reſpect

Gentlemen,

Your friend,

THOMAS PAINE.

LET-

LETTER

TO THE

ABBE SYEYES.

Paris, 8th July, 1791.

SIR,

"AT the moment of my departure for England, I read, in the *Moniteur* of Tuesday laſt, your letter, in which you give the challenge, on the ſubject of Government, and offer to defend what is called the *Monarchical opinion* againſt the Republican ſyſtem.

"I ACCEPT of your challenge with pleaſure; and I place ſuch a confidence in the ſuprioeirty of the Republican ſyſtem over that nullity of ſyſtem, called *Monarchy*, that I engage not to exceed the extent of fifty

fifty pages, and to leave you the liberty of taking as much latitude as you may think proper.

"THE reſpect which I bear your moral and literary reputation, will be your ſecurity for my candour in the courſe of this diſcuſſion; but, notwithſtanding that I ſhall treat the ſubject ſeriouſly and ſincerely, let me premiſe, that I conſider myſelf at liberty to ridicule as they deſerve, Monarchical abſurdities, whenſoever the occaſion ſhall preſent itſelf.

"BY Republicaniſm, I do not underſtand what the name ſignifies in Holland, and in ſome parts of Italy. I underſtand ſimply a government by repreſentation —a government founded upon the principles of the Declaration of Rights; principles

to

to which ſeveral parts of the French Conſtitution ariſe in contradiction. The Declarations of the Rights of France and America are but one and the ſame thing in principles, and almoſt in expreſſions; and this is the Republicaniſm which I undertake to defend againſt what is called *Monarchy* and *Ariſtocracy*.

I SEE with pleaſure, that in reſpect to one point, we are already agreed; and *that is the extreme danger of a Civil Liſt of thirty millions*. I can diſcover no reaſon why one of the parts of the government ſhould be ſupported with ſo extravagant a profuſion, whilſt the other ſcarcely receives what is ſufficient for its common wants.

" THIS dangerous and diſhonourable diſproportion, at once ſupplies the one with the

the means of corrupting, and throws the other into the predicament of being corrupted. In America there is but little difference, with regard to this point, between the legiſlative and the executive part of our government; but the firſt is much better attended to than it is in France.*

" In whatſoever manner, Sir, I may treat the ſubject of which you have propoſed the inveſtigation, I hope that you will not doubt my entertaining for you the higheſt eſteem. I muſt alſo add, that I am not the perſonal enemy of Kings. Quite the contrary. No man more heartily wiſhes than myſelf to ſee them all in the happy and honourable ſtate of private individuals; but, I am the avow-

* A Deputy to the Congreſs receives about a guinea and a half daily; and proviſions are cheaper in America than in France.

ed,

ed, open, and intrepid enemy of what is called Monarchy; and I am ſuch by principles which nothing can either alter or corrupt—by my attachment to humanity; by the anxiety which I feel within myſelf for the dignity and the honour of the human race; by the diſguſt which I experience, when I obſerved men directed by children, and governed by brutes; by the horror which all the evils that Monarchy has ſpread over the earth excite within my breaſt; and by thoſe ſentiments which make me ſhudder at the calamities, the exactions, the wars, and the maſſacres with which Monarchy has cruſhed mankind: in ſhort, it is againſt all the Hell of Monarchy that I have declared war.

(Signed) THOMAS PAINE."

THE END.